

## Message Text

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ACTION AID-31

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 IGA-02 EB-07 L-03

FDRE-00 AGR-05 TRSE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 IO-13 /093 W

-----131351Z 084029 /43

R 122149Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3491

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY BISSAU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, SG, CD, IV, MR, NG, UV, ML, PU, GA, CV

SUBJ: CONCLUSIONS OF THE REGIONAL PANEL ON SAHEL DEVELOPMENT,  
AFRICA CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE 9-12 MAY 1977

DEPT PASS AID/W AND PASS OTHER POSTS AT DEPT DISCRETION

SUMMARY: DURING MAY 9-12 ABIDJAN AFRICA CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE, US AMBASSADORS TO SAHEL STATES AND IVORY COAST CONSIDERED CURRENT SITUATION WITH REGARD TO SAHEL DEVELOPMENT, REACHED CONSENSUS POSITIONS ON SEVERAL POINTS, AND FORMULATED SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. PANEL III OF AF CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE DEALT WITH SAHEL DEVELOPMENT AND WAS ASSISTED IN ITS DELIBERATIONS BY AID  
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DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AFR, HAVEN NORTH; AF/W DIRECTOR THOMAS SMITH; AND HARRY R. MELONE, AMEMBASSY PARIS. CONCLUSIONS OF THIS REPORT DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THEIR VIEWS.

2. AFTER REVIEW OF US ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN THE SAHEL UP TO AND DURING MOST RECENT DROUGHT, PANEL EXAMINED CURRENT OBJECTIVES OF SAHEL DEVELOPMENT AS SEEN BY SAHEL COUNTRIES

INDIVIDUALLY AND AS GROUP, AND COMMENTED IN GENERAL ON PROGRAMS UNDERWAY. HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WAS SEEN AS VARIED WITHIN THE REGION, RANGING FROM KEEN INTEREST AND DEEP INVOLVEMENT ON PART OF GOVERNMENTS OF SENEGAL, MALI, UPPER VOLTA, THE GAMBIA AND NIGER TO A QUESTIONING OF THE IMMEDIATE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND OF PROLIFERATING TECHNICAL APPARATUS IN CHAD, MAURITANIA AND THE CAPE VERDE REPUBLIC WHERE THERE IS GREAT CONCERN ABOUT THE DEMANDS MADE BY REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS CILSS ON THE TIME OF THEIR LIMITED TECHNICAL CADRES. PARTICULAR ATTENTION WAS PAID IN DISCUSSION TO PRESENT AND POTENTIAL ECONOMIC INTERACTION OF LANDLOCKED SAHELIAN STATES WITH THEIR COASTAL NEIGHBORS OUTSIDE SAHEL ZONE.

3. PANEL NOTED DIFFERENT STATES OF DEVELOPMENT EXISTING IN SEVERAL SAHEL STATES AND RECOGNIZED DIFFICULTY OF MAKING REGIONAL GENERALIZATIONS. GROUP WELCOMED IMPORTANT ROLE AND APPLAUDED OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT OF UNITED STATES IN MARSHALING RESOURCES FOR SAHELIAN DEVELOPMENT, NOTING PARTICULARLY THE FOCUSED EFFORT OF AID/W AND THE CONGRESS. AT THE SAME TIME, PANEL NOTED THAT WE ARE ENTERING SECOND PHASE IN ELABORATION OF SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND STRESSED CRITICAL NEED FOR SIMILAR MASSIVE EFFORT BY ALL U.S. DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES IN MANAGEMENT AREA TO PARALLEL IMPRESSIVE AND SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO CONCEPTUALIZE AND GAIN GREATER ACCEPTANCE FOR A REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. THIS ANALOGOUS MASSIVE MANAGEMENT EFFORT IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO MOUNT AND IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVELY PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS REQUIRED TO FULFILL EXPECTATIONS OF THE SAHELIAN STATES AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

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4. IN ITS DELIBERATIONS ON INTERACTION BETWEEN SAHEL STATES AND COASTAL STATES, PANEL AGREED THAT, GIVEN HISTORIC, PRESENT AND PROJECTED ECONOMIC LINKS BETWEEN THE SAHEL AND THE COAST, AID SHOULD RE-EXAMINE ITS OWN GUIDELINES TO SEE WHETHER SOUND SAHELIAN DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES EXTRA-REGIONAL LINKS AND WHETHER A CAREFULLY SELECTED PROJECT IN COASTAL STATES COULD BE JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO SAHELIAN DEVELOPMENT.

5. THE PANEL EXPRESSED CONCERN FOR POTENTIAL PROBLEM OF COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN THE SAHEL AND COASTAL STATES AND NOTED NEED TO ENCOURAGE TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE COMPARATIVE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE OF THE SAHELIAN STATES IN MEAT AND GRAIN.

6. PANEL AGREED THAT A HIGH VISIBILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN THE SAHEL STATES WAS NEEDED TO COVER GAP BETWEEN SMALL AND LARGE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. IN THIS REGARD AIP IS VALUABLE DEVELOPMENT TOOL BUT IT APPEARS TO BE BACKSLIDING INTO THE SAME

RESTRICTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ROADBLOCKS AS OTHER AID PROGRAMS. A TIME CONSTRAINT OF 45 DAYS FOR AID/W APPROVAL OF ACCELERATED ACTIVITY PAPER MIGHT HALT THIS RETROGRESSION. ADDITIONALLY, A "COUNTRY AMOUNT" SHOULD BE SET ASIDE OR AN EXPANDED BUDGET PROVIDED, WITH MORE AUTHORITY FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION DELEGATED TO THE FIELD.

7. THE PANEL SAW NEED FOR SIMPLIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR PROJECT APPROVALS AND VIEWED SYMPATHETICALLY CURRENT AID/W EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THIS END BY IMPROVING ITS FIELD STAFF CAPABILITY FOR PROJECT DESIGN.

8. THE PANEL NOTED SOME DEFICIENCIES IN ENSURING THAT AID FIELD PERSONNEL ARE FULLY QUALIFIED FOR THEIR POSITIONS. ON FREQUENT PROBLEM CITED WAS INADEQUATE FRENCH LANGUAGE CAPABILITY WHICH LIMITED MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS AND COUNTERPARTS. A NEED FOR SPECIAL RECRUITING AMONG EX-PEACE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CORPS VOLUNTEERS AND FRANCOPHONE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES WAS INDICATED.

9. THE PANEL CONSENSUS WAS THAT EACH MISSION MUST HAVE A SINGLE ADMINISTRATIVE ELEMENT, REPORTING TO THE AMBASSADOR. THIS SECTION COULD BE STAFFED BY PERSONNEL FROM DIFFERENT AGENCIES BUT WOULD COMBINE ALL COMMON SERVICES IN A SINGLE, ALL-AGENCY SECTION. THIS PROPOSAL WAS CONSIDERED ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR THOSE SAHELIAN MISSIONS WITH SMALL EMBASSY STAFFS AND A GROWING AID PRESENCE.

10. AFTER HEARING VIEWS OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NORTH ON PROSPECTS FOR THE OTTAWA MEETING OF THE CLUB DU SAHEL, PANEL NOTED GENERAL SATISFACTION OF RECIPIENT COUNTRIES WITH THE CLUB'S ACTIVITIES BUT REGISTERED CONCERNS OF SOME SAHEL STATES THAT THEIR LIMITED GOVERNMENT RESOURCES MAY BE OVERWHELMED BY THE CLUB'S COMPLEX DETAILS AND COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS AND CONCLUDED THAT THIS PROBLEM SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND IN DETERMINING BOTH DONOR AND RECIPIENT ROLES.

11. FOLLOWING MR. NORTH'S REPORT ON STATUS OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE BILL, THE PANEL REGISTERED GREAT SATISFACTION WITH PROSPECTS FOR INCLUSION OF SOME INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

12. THE PANEL RECOMMENDS THAT CHIEFS OF MISSION IN THE SAHEL MEET REGULARLY, AND AT LEAST ANNUALLY, TO ASSESS PROGRESS OF THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, TO RECOMMEND NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS AND EXAMINE WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE TO EACH OTHER. FINANCING FOR THESE MEETINGS SHOULD BE PROVIDED IN AF BUDGET.

13. COMPLETE TEXTS OF THE PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDING  
THOSE NOT SUMMARIZED ABOVE WILL BE POUCHED TO THE DEPARTMENT.  
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